

Traces of a Recreated Reality: Rafael Bordalo Pinheiro's busts of Pai Paulino

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Abstract

Putting the main focus on a dimension of Rafael Bordalo Pinheiro's work, it can be observed that he made clay the raw material of his sculptures, represented as social mirror, with intelligence, sensibility and creativity. The plasticity of the material and the associated technique allowed him to emphasise facial traits, to caricature gestures and features, and to fill with life the depiction of several figures of his time. He sculpted busts of distinguished persons, and immortalised street characters and popular, picturesque or iconic figures of Portuguese society, either anonymous or not. In such a collection, we will find the representation of some black people, among them the former slave Pai Paulino, a popular figure of the 19th century Lisbon.

Keywords: Rafael Bordalo Pinheiro, Pai Paulino, creativity, slavery, colonialism, Berlin Conference, British Ultimatum, artistic representations of black people, caricature, art/testimony

1. Introduction

Intelligence, Creativity and Fantasy are three challenging concepts, provided the complexity and intercessions they hold concerning the processes of knowledge, the sensitivities, the association and production of ideas, the capacity for resolutions and the production of objects. The unknown is processed with imagination when engaging the rational and emotional intelligence, the mental system. Yet, if it is true that creativity presupposes imagination, the latter goes further, opening a space towards fantasy.

When combined with human rationality and sustained by the imagination, creativity, essential in everyday resistance and an inseparable companion to freedom, is a condition for humanity's survival and development. Taken, for a long time, as an ability only reachable by some minds in very specific fields, creativity is now understood as a potentiality of intelligence, liable to be developed by all humans. Innate or acquired, it is part of a learning process enabling each person to obtain the capabilities to create and recreate objects and goals and to ponder on ways of thinking and generate energy. It allows for dreaming, for conceiving, enacting, interpreting, to understand, to represent, to transmit, and to raise awareness.

The imagination surrounds us beyond what we think. There is no universe, nature or history without imagination. There is no knowledge without creativity. There are no experiences or truths without knowledge, imagination and emotion. The creative ability applies to the most various domains, to any activity and all aspects and levels of our existence from the individual to the

social, from the concrete to the dream, from the sensibility to the belief. We dare to say that learning to imagine equals learning to live and, like all human action, entails a cultural enhancement.

For this study, we engaged with Rafael Bordalo Pinheiro (1846-1905), one of the most important figures of Portuguese culture in the late 19th and early 20th centuries, and how he depicted Africans in his artistic production. The subject is directly related to the issues of colonialism and slavery. Slavery that, as a social matter, was not only itself a human creation, constantly recreated throughout the ages, but was also a source of inspiration and reflection on the human condition. In this case, the approach focuses on the figures of black people residing in Portugal and is based on the reflections provided by the busts of the unique figure Pai Paulino.

2. The multifaceted work of Bordalo Pinheiro

A shrewd observer of deep sensibility and humanism, and carrier of unique creativity and strong critical voice, Bordalo Pinheiro portrayed black people in all sorts of ways in his vast and diversified artistic work, pointing to modes of life and patterns of relationship. Based on his work, we attempt a possible interpretation of some of his pieces, with the conviction that it is required to know how to 'read' Bordalo. We will try to find the discourse that underlies the work of this remarkable spirit who has endowed his art with an intense social meaning and a no less intense criticism of manners.

Versatile in his areas of interest, he was the author of a written, drawn, painted, and modelled body of

work with relevant documental value for the history of Portugal of the last quarter of the 19th century. He was a draughtsman, watercolourist, illustrator, decorator, publicist, the precursor of the artistic poster in Portugal, and master of the lithography. In love with the theatre, he was an actor. Aware of the cultural and political life, he left countless chronicles where he depicts several aspects of that day-to-day life. As a journalist, he had an intensive activity, contributing both to the national and international press. He published several newspapers, albums and almanacks, in which he had the collaboration of renowned authors, as Guerra Junqueiro, Guilherme de Azevedo (using the pseudonym João Rialto), Ramalho Ortigão, João Chagas, Júlio Dantas and D. João da Câmara, among many others¹.

He was an eminent caricaturist, using humour and satire as his main weapons. In 1875, in the humoristic newspaper *A Lanterna Mágica*, the first Portuguese daily publication dedicated to social criticism, emerged one of his most famous creations: the *Zé Povinho* (Joe Public). A symbol of a resigned people, who has in the 'manguito' (arm-gesture of contempt or insult) his most potent weapon against the sovereign powers². The success of this figure was so substantial that it remains as a critical reference in Portuguese life (Silva, 2007: 243-253). Similarly, the incisive titles and drawings on the cover of the magazine *A Paródia*, with which he qualified the political, social and economic reality of his time, are still relevant. Nowadays, the most widespread are *A Política: a Grande Porca* (Politics: the Great Swine), *A Finança: o Grande Cão* (Finance: the Great Dog), *A Economia: a Galinha Choca* (Economy: the Broody Hen) or *A Retórica Parlamentar: o Grande Papagaio* (The Parliamentary Rhetoric: the Great Parrot) (Pinheiro, 1900, 24 de Janeiro; 1900, 17 de Janeiro; 1900, 16 de Maio; 1900, 7 de Fevereiro)³.

From 1885, Bordalo Pinheiro devoted himself to ceramics in the newly created Fábrica de Faianças das Caldas da Rainha (faience factory), of which he was appointed artistic director. He introduced the

industrial manufacture with modern machinery and equipment, as well as workers with specialised artistic and technical training. The pieces he created, with naturalistic features, intertwine a keen awareness of reality with a rich and daring imaginary. His extensive production ranges from utilitarian tableware to decorative items both for indoor and outdoor, including garden ornaments, colourful roof tiles and recreational glazed tiles that, in José Augusto França's words, reflect an "end-of-century" taste between the popular and the "kitsch" (França, 1992, p. 96).

He also devoted himself to sculpture, which he combined with portrait. He chose clay as the raw material for his stereotyped figures, where the plasticity of the material enabled him to emphasise facial traits and to caricature gestures and features of several figures of his time. He sculpted busts of distinguished persons, and immortalised street characters and popular, picturesque or iconic figures of Portuguese society, either anonymous or not. The *bonecos de movimento* (movement figures) became famous, such as the Nany from Caldas, the Policeman, the Sacristan and the Priest. Also celebrated were 60 figures from the passion of Christ that he sculpted, commissioned by the Portuguese government, for the Buçaco Chapels⁴. According to Fialho de Almeida's critical appraisal, "they are the dawning in the national sculpture of a dramatic era only sporadically renewed after Machado de Castro [...]" (Almeida, 1933: 116; Cf. Couto, 2003-2006).

From the lower social rankings, the black people did not go unnoticed, with existence in Portuguese society going back centuries, linking them to slavery and the collective imagination. Bordalo placed them alongside Zé Povinho, Patient Mary, the Priest, the Policeman and many other key figures, giving them the honour to be part of his gallery of figures from everyday life. In representing them, the ceramist, in a more or less burlesque fashion, stressed their features, enhanced the colours, evidenced their muscles, emphasised their qualities and flaws, and provided them with captions of

¹ The newspapers *O Binóculo* (1846-1905a), *A Lanterna Mágica* (1868-1875), *O António Maria* (1846-1905b), *A Paródia* (1846-1905c), the albums of caricatures *O Calcanhar de Aquiles* (1870), *Álbum das Glórias* (1880-1883) and the comic strip *A Berlinda* (1870-1871) were some of Rafael Bordalo's publications in Portugal. He also published the *Mapa de Portugal* (Map of Portugal), which had great success, with sales of over 4000 copies within a month. Between 1873 and 1875, he collaborated as an illustrator in the Spanish journals *Ilustración* of Madrid, *Ilustración Española y Americana*, *El Mundo Cómico*, *El Bazar* *Ilustración* and in several French and English magazines. During his stay in Brazil, he directed, collaborated and owned several publications, as was the case, of the caricature magazines *Psit!!!* (1877) and *O*

Besouro (1878-79), without ever losing contact with the Portuguese reality and editions (Couto, 2003-2006).

² José Augusto França, an eminent Portuguese art historian, when referring to this newspaper, praises the author by pointing out that in a period marked by the mediocrity of the national graphic humour, "a work of quality emerged, due to the allusive imagination and the skill of the drawing" (França, 1992: 93).

³ On the relevance of Bordalo in illustrated journalism in Portugal see the article by Raquel Henriques da Silva (2007: 242).

⁴ Of the 86 figures commissioned, Rafael Bordalo Pinheiro only made 60 that are in José Malhoa Museum, in Caldas da Rainha, Portugal.

mismatched worlds. Notwithstanding, by depicting them, he gave them authenticity and a place in Portuguese society, regardless of the humorous features, with which he might or might not have enwrapped them.

3. Traces of a recreated reality

Present in almost every economic sector, performing the most different tasks, living side by side with all the other elements of the population, the Africans, of a more or less pronounced colour, and either slaves or freemen did not fully participate in Portuguese society. Yet, it can neither be said that they were unwanted. On the contrary, they have always been seen as an essential labour force and an important factor for wealth. However, their acceptance was relative. Only economic power, social or intellectual prestige, or some circumstance of popularity, were capable of opening the gaps in the social barrier that prejudice maintained.

This population of colour has always been seen as an exotic element ready to arouse curiosity and fill in the records. The iconographic and literary reading of national and foreign authors highlight such social and cultural dimension of Portuguese life after the 15th century. It is a latent memory of the paintings of public spaces, as in the case of the controversial anonymous 16th century *O Chafariz d'El-Rey* and *Rua Nova dos Mercadores*. Also, of the paintings *Vista do Mosteiro dos Jerónimos* (1657) by Filipe Lobo, *O Terreiro do Paço* (1662) by Dirk Stoop, *O Cais do Sodré* (1785) by Joaquim Marques, and the work *A Feira das Bestas* (1792) by Nicolas Delerive, among many other pictorial records. Similarly relevant are the several records from chronicles or letters, journals and descriptions, literary and, even, of legal texts that allow an approach to this reality and the mental frameworks of different epochs. As an example we have the record of the late 16th century entitled *Ritratto e Riverso del Regno di Portogallo*⁵, the description *Tratado da majestade, grandeza e abastança da cidade de Lisboa*, presented in the mid 16th century

by João Brandão de Buarcos (1923), the *Descrição do Reino de Portugal*, by Duarte Nunes de Leão (2002), the *Diário* (1787-1788) by William Beckford (1957), the book *Portugal. Recordações do ano de 1842*, by the prince Félix Lichnowsky (2005), not to mention theatre plays and cord literature [literature de cordel], religious and popular records, woodcuts, lithographs and tile panels.

In the 19th century, the presence of black and mixed people, free or freed was still substantial, although the Pombaline legislation of 1761, 1767 and 1773 contributed to its reduction⁶. There were, of course, changes in the social environment, regarding the previous centuries, especially after the Pombaline decree of January 16, 1773, which considered the freed "fit for all jobs, honours, and dignities, without the distinguishing mark of freedmen [...]" (Silva, 1830b, 640). The black people continued exercising several different activities, from servants to sellers, from errand boys to master of dance, from musicians to sailors, from prostitutes to beggars, who beg for their masters, not forgetting that among them were also owners, men of letters and members of the clergy. Similarly, artists continued to depict them in the streets, in homes, in churches, in daily activities, in festivities, working in shows, as entertainers, as entourage figures, or as individuals who, somehow, managed to overcome anonymity⁷.

Often, the black man also appears as an aesthetic model. In this sense, beyond the representation itself, it can still be measured the social and cultural interpretation involving artists and models. Depending on the artist's goal, the portrait may focus on an idealised or a real black man, in his daily duties or his moments of fun, as a child, a young adult or as an older person. It may be a hardened, a naive or a sensual black. With a polished or rude and ragged appearance, even a savage, with traits of struggle, or of dependence. With an expression of audacity or grace, of pride or melancholy and absent glance (Cf. Neto, 1999). Black children were part of the domestic staff and these scenes, appearing with their masters, or playing alongside

5 Regarding this work see Radulet (1997, Dezembro)

6 By royal orders of September 19, 1761, and January 2, 1767, Pombal intended to divert traffic to the colonies, especially to Brazil, by proclaiming all blackmen and mulattos free, which were arriving from America, Africa, and Asia and landing in the Portuguese metropolis. For this purpose, they did not need any letter of manumission or emancipation, nor any other decree besides the certificates of the administrators and customs officials of where they had arrived (Silva, 1830: 811-812). Concerning the freedom of the children of slaves, Pombal decreed, by the law of January 16, 1773, that only the descendants of slave mothers or grandmothers should remain in this condition, but this condition would not be transmitted to later generations. Those whose condition already came from great-grandmothers would be free, even though their

mothers and grandmothers were slaves. Independently of these determinations, the law granted freedom to all those born after its publication. (Silva, 1830: 640). However, as foreseen in the Ordenações Manuelinas, it was still in place, since the 16th century, the determination of the suspension of manumission if the individual proved himself to be in any way ungrateful to his old master (Coimbra et al., s.d.: Livro IV, Título LV).

7 See the 19th century lithographs *Negros em cavalinhos de pasta* by Legrand, included in *Álbum Touradas*, and *O Carnaval de Lisboa*, by Canongia. This is also the case of the famous black saints, St. Anthony of Noto, St. Benedict the Moor, St. Elesbaan King of Ethiopia and St. Ephigenia of Ethiopia, represented in the altar of the Brotherhood Irmandade do Rosário dos Homens Pretos (Our Lady of the Rosary of the Black Men), in the church of Graça, in Lisbon.

the white boys and pets⁸.

In general, the portrayal of Africans in scenes from everyday life was a symbol of those that had significant possessions. Their image served mainly to proclaim a social status, a certain opulence and the good nature of those they served⁹. Being portrayed with a black woman servant, who serenely performs her duty, or with a little black boy playing by the edge of her dress, was a matter of good taste that emphasised power, magnitude and possessions brought from the 'new' worlds. This notion is also embedded in the representation of the chained slaves, carved in the coach that was part of embassy parade sent by D. John V to Pope Clement XI, in 1716.

Through their representation in art, some Africans became famous, who would have otherwise remained unknown. We can mention Catarina, slave of the supervisor Rui Fernandes, portrayed in 1521 by Albrecht Dürer. Another case was the dwarves in the court of D. Maria I, who was simultaneously a curiosity and an amusement, and whose portraits have reached the present day through the painting *Mascarada nupcial* (1788), by José Conrado Rosa, a Portuguese painter of the second half of the 18th century¹⁰. Another famous jester had already been expressly mentioned in print: João de Sá, a "black creole" born a slave in Portugal, to whom D. John III granted manumission and favoured with the habit of the Order of Santiago. He was considered one of the wittiest men of his time. A target of constant mockery due to his colour, he replied in a tone of caustic irony that "the happiness of a Portuguese knight consisted in calling himself Vasconcelos, having a farm, six hundred thousand reis of income, being a

fool, and being good for nothing" (Sabugosa, 1923: 94-97). In *Colecção Política de Apotegmas* (Moraes, 1761), were registered some of the playful sayings that were directed at him and others with which he taunted the court's noblemen¹¹.

The Blacks of St. George were also famous. They were part of the procession of Corpus Christi in the City of Lisbon dressed flamboyantly in white trousers, wearing a red coat and hat, playing the trumpets, flute and drums. They sent the "gang" towards the streets shouting the stepping out of the Holy Knight on feast day¹². In 1875, the Brotherhood of St. George, in which they were integrated, still received from the city's municipality 50 mil reis, with which it gratified the five "little blacks" of S. George (Brásio, 1944: 107). They were carved, for posterity, in painted wood, paper and fabric, in an anonymous miniature sculpture from the 19th century¹³. The coloured lithography by Roque Gameiro, dated from 1888, also survived until the present, portraying a standardised St. George's black man.

In the same way, Pai Cândido was photographed, when he was already a free man, by Paulo Guedes in 1904, jamming with his 'court', settled in Rossio, songs and dances, using sounds extracted from cans, which delighted the audience¹⁴. We cannot forget the "black Fernanda", a famous figure of Lisbon's daily life from the beginning of the 20th century. Her fantasised memories were perpetuated in the book *Lembranças de uma colonial (memórias da preta Fernanda)*, published in 1912 by A. Totta and F. Machado. Neither can we neglect the very popular aunt Carolina, "the black woman of the pine nuts", who died at the age of 115, and had a full body photography of herself

⁸ See the detail of tiles frieze that can be found at Fundação Medeiros e Almeida, in Lisbon, which represent the playfulness of a white boy with a black boy and a dog.

⁹ In D. Manuel's Book of Hours the black people appear represented in their daily labour. On the other hand, Cristóvão de Moraes portrays D. Joanna of Austria, D. Sebastian's mother, with her hand resting on a black child's head. In addition, in the mid-17th century, Manuel Franco reproduces the prince D. Afonso VI playing with a black boy. In any case, we do not know whether they are slaves or not, but, at least in the two last examples, they are represented with the apparatus required by the nobility to which they belong.

¹⁰ Rosa, the famous dwarf, was the favourite one, holding private chambers near D. Maria. William Beckford described her as a "black, large lipped, and flattened nose" dwarf, all adorned while flirting with a Moorish servant. The same author describes that when the court went to Salitre Theatre, it was accompanied by their little black children and their service dwarfs. They were figures of the entourage that everyone loved. The queen set the example and the whole royal family "competed to see who was doing more cuddles and caresses to D. Rosa" (Beckford, 1957: 213). In this painting it is also represented the slave

Ciriaco, portrayed in the previous year by Joaquim Leonardo da Rocha, in oil on wood, on display at Bocage's Museum, in Lisbon. Because he had large white spots on his body, he was the subject of various studies and observations on the origin of the black colour of his epidermis.

¹¹ (Cf. Moraes, 1761: 297-298). Another well-known black jester, but of whom we have less information, was Dom Tissão, which amused the house of the Marquis of Pombal (Dantas, 1969: 10).

¹² Irivalva Moita mentions that the Blacks of St. George dressed in red and playing the fife and drum were the most decorative and popular set of the Corpus Christi procession (Moita, 1979).

¹³ The sculpture, which is under the care of Museu do Chiado in Lisbon, is formed by five uniform black men with their respective instruments displayed on a base. The piece has 140 mm by 180 mm, without the glass case, and 245 mm by 205 mm with the case.

¹⁴ The term pai (father) or mãe (mother) are designations attributed by the Africans to a person as demonstration of respect for their age and the wisdom acquired during his/her life.

published by the newspaper *Diário de Notícias* on her funeral day, on December 28, 1943. These are just a few examples.

4. Bordalo Pinheiro and Pai Paulino

The presence of black people was not strange in Rafael Bordalo Pinheiro's work. He left us representations of Africans sculpted in clay and drawn in his many caricatures. Sometimes, as in the case of the figures of the Stations of the Cross, Africans are present with their full existential burden¹⁵. At other times, as in the garden statuettes or in the African warrior figure, they fill the space with the strong musculature of their black naked bodies. At other occasions, the artist caricatured them, accentuating their features, satirising burlesque aspects and criticisable customs. Related to this are the several figures of the black king Gungunhana, in which Bordalo combines shapes with attitudes and reproduces a defeated power merged with the irrepressible addiction to alcohol¹⁶. It is the strength of the model's inner expression that stands out in his modelled heads and busts. Among the latter are the busts of the black man Pai Paulino, a very popular figure from 19th century Lisbon.

Paulino José da Conceição was a former black slave, born in Bahia, probably in 1798, who was part of the Brazilian contingent of troops that accompanied D. Pedro IV in the landing of liberals at Mindelo on July 8, 1832. Among the 7500 'Brave of Mindelo', Pai Paulino was one of those who stood out in the fighting, for which feat he was honoured. He lived at n. 12 Travessa Nova de Santos, in Lisbon. He was a whitewasher, an entertainer in the bullfighting arena of Campo de

Santana square, a St. George fife player. He served as brother in the black religious brotherhoods, and was a "representative" for those of "his race". It is not strange he became so popular, not only for what he was and for what he represented, but also for what in him was projected by the many social groups. He died of cachexia on March 12, 1869, and was buried without a coffin in a grave in the cemetery of Alto de S. João, in Lisbon (Neto, 1998, pp. 193-202).

He belonged to the brotherhoods *Irmandade de Nossa Senhora do Rosário e Adoração dos Santos Reis* (of Our Lady of the Rosary and Worship of the Holy Kings) and *Irmandade dos Homens Pretos com o título Jesus, Maria, José* (of the Black Men with the title Jesus, Mary and Joseph), both in Lisbon. He was also "high dignitary" of the court of the "Empire of the Kingdom of Congo", which under these brotherhoods gathered people of colour, managed a fictitious kingdom, similarly to the European courts, elected a sovereign and appointed representatives that performed social actions (Pimentel, 2010: 151-177).

Since the 16th century, the coloured population integrated these religious organisations, which had their charters and carried out the important mission of aiding their brothers socially and morally¹⁷. Since they were constituted of slaves or former slaves, in either case, marginalised individuals, they had extraordinary importance not only given the beneficence purposes to which they were intended but also regarding the representative strength and the significance they held against their counterparts of free white men. They were a form of integration and, simultaneously, of preserving African culture. This

¹⁵ About the figures of the Stations in the Cross, Fialho de Almeida, with his penetrating literary style, stresses Bordalo's genius, visible in those figures "of a great and rare beauty" and expressive strength, fruit of a "boiling genius [...] [which] snatches from the malleable mud pieces of brutish form, even fragmented at times, but all of them vibrant and insanely inventive, of a fethal energy of the soul of monsters, of a perceptiveness of creation full of dreams; and at the hand of the strange creative fire that holds him, here he is forging in this defenceless clay a humanity distinct from the contemporary, nervous and his, dislodged from the conventional, hieratic and rough [...]" (Almeida, 1933: 143).

¹⁶ Gungunhana was the last king of Gaza, nowadays a territory south of Mozambique. His reign lasted from 1884 until December 28, 1895, day in which he was taken prisoner by Mouzinho de Albuquerque, following the military campaigns of occupation and pacification of the African territories undertaken by Portugal. The start of his reign coincided with the Berlin Conference (November 15, 1884 to February 26, 1885) in which the European powers shared amongst themselves the African continent. That Gungunhana was a famous figure in the European press was, surely, relevant in the Portuguese administration's decision of bringing him to Lisbon and then banishing him

to the Azores. Bordalo Pinheiro caricatured him as "Asclepius" in various drawings that accompanied poetry and news articles in which the ruler was mocked mercilessly (Eduardo Fernandes) (Pinheiro, 1896, 14 de Março; 1896, 11 de Abril; 1896, 6 de Fevereiro). He also created several pieces in ceramics (pitchers, bottles, jars) ridiculing his figure and the symbols of African power.

¹⁷ The first Rosary brotherhood was created at the church of S. Domingos, initially by white brothers, to which later on the blacks associated themselves and which, in 1551, was already divided into two, one clearly of whites and another of blacks, as clearly reports Cristóvão Rodrigues de Oliveira in *Sumário* (Oliveira, 1987: 67). In 1565, the crown approved the Charter of the *Irmandade de Nossa Senhora do Rosário dos Homens Pretos*. It became involved in continuous biquering with the white brothers. The black brothers ended up being expelled from the monastery, taking refuge in other Brotherhoods of blacks that had in the meanwhile been formed, such as the *Confraria de Jesus, Maria, José* in the Church of Carmo. Only in the mid 17th century did it acquired a new projection, with the readmission of the black brothers and the restitution of some of the former privileges (Lahon, 2013).

included its monetary fund, obtained through contributions, alms and other sources of profit, among them, renting slave labour ("money-earning slaves"), to carry out burials and, by royal privilege, whenever possible, to purchase the manumission of fellow slaves, even against the owner's will¹⁸. Besides participating in the liberation processes, they opposed the separation of families through the sale of their members, the trade of slaves to distant lands, especially to Brazil, where slavery was still in effect and defended the slaves who were under precarious conditions or being mistreated, denouncing the masters' cruelty¹⁹.

As "representative" of the "Empire of the Kingdom of Congo", Pai Paulino defended, before the Portuguese crown, the rights of the black, slave or emancipated population on Portuguese mainland territory. As recorded in *Livro da Irmandade dos Homens Pretos com o título Jesus, Maria, José, situada no Convento dos Religiosos de Jesus da Terceira Ordem da Penitência do Patriarca S. Francisco*, Paulino José da Conceição enrolled in this brotherhood "on the 14th day of the month of January of the year 1844 [...] becoming at once a judge [...] and promising "to keep the Commitment and orders that were made towards the good government of aforementioned brotherhood" (Neto, 1999: 226; 1998: 196). According to the same document, at that time, he lived at "Santo Amaro Street, n. 26". Later on, his autograph signature appears, as signatory, in the covenant *Compromisso dos Irmãos Pretos da Irmandade de Nossa Senhora do Rosário e Adoração dos Santos Reis*, which worshipped in the chapel da Senhora das Almas in the old asylum of S.

Domingos, dated September 6, 1853 (Neto, 1998: 196). It is assumed that until 1864, he worked in both institutions, at which time, according to the newspaper *Jornal do Commercio*, "they crushed him out of the position" (1864, 23 de Julho).

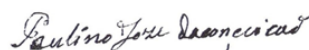


Fig. 1: Pai Paulino's signature in the Brotherhood *Irmandade dos Homens Pretos com o título Jesus, Maria, José*.

The newspaper *Jornal do Commercio*, by the pen of the chronicler Ribeiro Guimarães, who was a critical thinker vigilant to the intricacies of daily life, highlights the festivities, the social activities and internal disputes of these African imperial courts, constituted under the protection of religious brotherhoods²⁰. From his chronicles, where he compares the court of the "Empire of the Kingdom of Congo" with the "European Courts", emerges not only the news, full of exoticism, but also a critical reference. From the comparison, the author draws caustic remarks to the European institutions and the bitter laughter of humiliation of the Africans. With this in mind, he emphasises in the chronicle published in edition 2790:

The blacks are like our Portuguese, they only want a natural king [...]. Princess Sebastiana's crown is a sham, but it doesn't cost a drop of blood. Hers is a paper throne, but it doesn't stand over thousands of corpses. The crown of the Empire of the Kingdom of Congo is a joke; but how we cry in front of so many legitimate, serious and noble crowns, maintained only by oppression, the bayonets and by the usurpation of the most sacred human rights. (Guimarães, 1863, 27

¹⁸ In the 18th century, after the Pombaline resolution that freed all slaves entering the kingdom, the brotherhoods of blacks that enjoyed such privilege protested to the royal authorities for the freedom granted to them by the 1761 law, when the legislation was not respected (Brásio, 1944).

¹⁹ The sale of slaves to territories outside of Portugal was one of their preoccupations. Many masters proceeded to the sale of slaves, especially for Brazil, as a form of punishment or revenge by which they did not lose Money, or, in the case of slaves born at home, as a means of subtracting them, profitably, to the law of 1773 that guaranteed their freedom. It is not difficult to imagine the conflicts that these privileges must have caused between masters and slaves. As a result, the right to purchase manumissions against the masters' will was not always in effect. (Brásio, 1944, 90). Didier Lahon points out that "in Lisbon, the masters of slaves who wished to sell their slaves abroad, had such fear of the unexpected intervention of one of the black institutions of the capital, before or at the time of shipment, that some added a clause, held by the owner, to the insurance registered in a notary, in case the boarding did not take place due to a brotherhood. (Lahon, 2011, 17-18).

²⁰ By occasion of the festivities in honour of the patron saint, besides the religious program, the regency of the

Empire of the Congo organized parties in which took presence the Africans and their descendants, as well as white people that offered the court cakes and liqueurs while being graced with titles. "Yesterday took place the first ball, in the royal palace of the Forest, held by princess Sebastiana Júlia, regent of the kingdom of the empire of the Congo. It was very crowded of whites and the niggers were splendid. The princess had her throne on the stage and there she was surrounded by her court, composed of duchesses, countesses and maids, as her royal guard of halberds. [...] After midnight, the guests that had paid entry tickets left and the princess and her court, her subjects and a few whites remained. Then the princess descended from her throne and conceded to dance with the regent prince Congo's national dance with great gravitas. [...] Plenty was danced. Some black women, and particularly l'dy Sebastiana, danced with finesse and gravity the *Banzé*, the national dance. [...] there was a distribution of titles in the process of wooing several whites. One received the title of marquis of Hackney, another of count of Haringey and another of marquis of Newham. These whites, grateful of such a distinction, granted the princess and the chamberlain with a cocktail of maidenhair syrup, liqueurs and cakes. [...]" (Guimarães, 1863, 27 de Janeiro; 1863, 24 de Janeiro).

de Janeiro)

In edition 937, in the article titled "The Guardian of the Blacks", he highlights the figure and action of Pai Paulino:

The blacks have in Lisbon an unveiled guardian, of weak condition, but full pride; this guardian is another black man, he is Pai Paulino José da Conceição, judge of the Brotherhood of Jesus, Mary e Joseph. The black Pai Paulino, according to what he told us, has contributed to liberating many of his colour, who have come here from Africa still has slaves; as soon as he is told that someone arrives in Lisbon, he shortly handles it, so that he does not have to return to Africa. He says that it has already happened that some came well treated, as deck boys and sailors, and then shipped to Brazil in the same quality are sold there. The black man Paulino does not limit himself to their protection, he assists, with his diligence and good will, all who for any reason, find themselves harassed or in need of support. Recently, three black men, João Lopes de Chira, António Januário and Manoel Joaquim António, who were the slaves of Manoel Joaquim de Sousa Monteiro in Angola, arrived in the patache *Perpétua*: they managed to leave the ship and enlist in the Royal Navy, finding themselves as ship's boys on board the carrack *Vasco da Gama*. When coming to black Paulino's attention that they had been mistreated on board of the patache, he immediately filed a complaint to the minister of the Navy, and the inspector of the shipyard, asking the captain to be punished were it proven that he mistreated the blacks. In short, he has advocated his cause with great endeavour. The black Paulino says that he is very grateful to the minister of the Navy and the inspector of the shipyard for their good reception, treating him with great patience. (Ribeiro, 1856, 26 de Outubro).

In 1859, Ribeiro Guimarães reported the existing conflicts in the "Brotherhood of the blacks", which had refused to participate in the Corpus Christi procession, with the portable platforms of worshipped saints, and the sadness such absence caused in Lisbon's population. The appearance of the black men with their typical revelry "was perhaps the most exciting public curiosity". At the heart of the conflict is, once again, the figure of Pai Paulino, now as "dictator of Lisbon's niggers and judge of the Brotherhood". Heated by the offences he claimed to have received from the Holy Brotherhood, which refused to give him "a dispatch house", "he did not allow the Brotherhood to take its place in the procession." With disdain, the chronicler ponders on the scope of the dispute: "After the issue of the succession to the throne of the empire of the Kongo, perhaps this is the most serious with which Pai Paulino has been faced" (Ribeiro, 1856, 26 de Outubro)²¹.

²¹ In 1908, the newspaper *Diário de Notícias* still emphasises the execution of these processions with the participation of Africans and the memory of Pai Paulino and the entire generation that came after him, thirty-nine years after his death (1908. 19 de Junho).

²² Henrique Burnay, 1st Count of Burnay, of Belgian

Rafael Bordalo Pinheiro participated in these satirical humour that had as object not so much the experiences of the African community but, mainly, to make a sharp critique of the misrule and the profligacy of the Portuguese customs. In the balancing of different realities, the criticism was inserted, the opinion was expressed and the laughter, which typically marks the comic expressions, was promoted. On February 12, 1880, with the title *O Baile dos Preto*, Bordalo mocked the reception given by the new Queen D. Filipa, in the Amoreiras Street. The caption reveals mocking and critical puns:

A less refined ball than that of the palace of Ajuda. Her Majesty dances the tango with the president of the council at the guests' request. The war minister holds a little *presumptive* kinky hair, freeing us from being the ones to *support* him. In summary, the impressions we got from the party. Great friendliness and plenty of rank smell on the part of their Majesties and Highnesses. Some say that the constituent party looks with jealousy at this black ministry, which rose to power ahead of him. (Pinheiro, 1880, 12 de Fevereiro)

A few months later, during the celebrations of the Tercentenary of Camões, Pai Paulino is depicted mocking the poet because the portable platforms of Africans, took "his majesty" while the civil procession in his honour had only the "popular majesty" in the Corpus Christi procession, (Pinheiro, 1880, 17 de Junho). In the issue of September 28, 1882, from the same humorous newspaper, Bordalo dedicates some verses to "her Majesty the new queen of the Congo", and in it he, once again, refers to Pai Paulino. The subtle mockery of Portuguese politicians is evident (Pinheiro, 1882, 28 de Setembro). Bordalo, after expressing his veneration as a "white man" to the queen, whose colour "does not tarnish the golden radiance of the royal crown", offers his services and advises her that to make her reign a fortunate, long and just one, she must be cautious when choosing the "Paulinos" to whom she will give the ministries of war and justice. Moreover, she should not falter in punishing laziness. He urges, furthermore, if noticing any embezzlement in the kingdom's finances, she must, without tumult or fuss, call Burnay²². He will have a quick remedy to reestablish the finances, and she will be able to see the "shining metal" prosper in her endeavours, become surrounded by splendour and greatness and receive from the people praises and commendations. (Pinheiro, 1882, 28 de Setembro). By that time, Paulino José da Conceição had already

descent, in his time known as "Lord One Million", was a Portuguese businessperson and politician with strong international connections to whom Rafael Bordalo Pinheiro gave no rest in his caricaturist quest.

died, giving place to a "new" Pai Paulino who had inherited his name and, like him, was an entertainer in the Lisbon bullrings²³. In 1888, Bordalo Pinheiro drew a caricature, published in the July 28 issue of the weekly newspaper *Pontos nos ii*, with the caption:

The bullfight's Pai Paulino is so popular that we decided to publish his true effigy. We don't want such a man to die imprinted on the trench without the consolation of firstly having been printed on paper» (Pinheiro, 1888, 28 de Julho: 167).

However, this is not the Pai Paulino that the ceramist immortalised in a bust where the burden of old age is significant.

There are two busts of Pai Paulino belonging to Rafael Bordalo Pinheiro's Museum: one from 1894 and another, less known, from the previous year. These are the two busts we want to highlight from Rafael Bordalo Pinheiro's artistic production. There are also two other versions of the bust of 1894, with distinct polychromy, one in the Berardo collection and another in the National Ceramic Museum. Clearly, Rafael Bordalo Pinheiro was touched by this singular figure, which was his contemporary. So much so, that he ended up portraying him, by heart, near the end of his life. It is also a fact that Paulino José da Conceição met the man who knew how to keep him "alive" for posterity.

In 1893, Bordalo Pinheiro portrayed Pai Paulino, in a painted terracotta version, not as a typical Lisbon character but as an individual. Instead of giving him merely the facial features moulded by time, the skin tone, the colourful clothes, Bordalo shows us, in the bust, an inner expression that we imagine had been that of Pai Paulino the bullfighting entertainer, the bagpiper and the "guardian of the black men". The busts reveal traces of a reality and engrave destinies, instants of life and, evidently, reflect the greatness of the master who created them and gave them a form with meaning.



Fig. 2: (left) The bust of "Pai Paulino" from August 1893 signed by Rafael Bordalo Pinheiro. Painted terracotta sculpture. Photo © José Manuel Costa Alves; (right) The bust of "Pai Paulino" dated 1894 and signed with the monogram "RBP" and the brand *Fábrica de Faianças das Caldas da Rainha*. Escultura in glazed faience. © Museu Bordalo Pinheiro/EGEAC.

In 1894, in order to commercialise the piece, Bordalo Pinheiro made a new Pai Paulino bust, using, once again, his favourite material – the clay. In this case, the piece appears white and glazed, lacking the bold colours of the clothes, and seeming to reinforce the humanism of the figure's glance. Unlike the previous piece, which he signed with his full name, "Rafael Bordalo Pinheiro" and the date August 1893, this last bust appears with the monogram "RBP" and the brand *Fábrica de Faianças das Caldas da Rainha* and the reference to the year of 1894.

This second bust was, possibly, to commercialise. Bordalo put it on a base and inscribed in it Pai Paulino's name, reinforcing his identity. He turned him into a symbol, providing him with an enigmatic and insightful glance, perhaps in supplication or in the rapture of one who, slave or free, always lived in the fringes of society. His gaze reveals a past and, above all, a desire for the future. There are dreams in the eyes of Pai Paulino.

When looking at the busts, it is impossible to remain without reaction: they are, in fact, "figures that capture the eyes." (Almeida, 1933: 117). What we have before us is, rather than just the details of

²³ The black men were a prominent figure in the bullrings, where besides being in charge of the cleaning of the arena and the bullpens, they were also used as entertainers during remission. The great adherence of the audience made the participation of black men mandatory in bullfights held in the capital, whose programs reserved at least two tickets for each day of show. (Cf. Tinhorão, 1988: 228). William Beckford, in his *Diary in Portuguese lands*, expresses his displeasure at this kind of amusement, which he calls a "lugubrious spectacle", in which some black men jumped into the arena dressed "as monkeys, wagging their tails, in the midst of the hideous clatter of who knows how

many awful bassoons and rabecs", while others, "stuck in bags stumbled and rolled before of the bulls, making them lose their patience" (Beckford, 1957: 151). The black men Benedict the Tenacious, the Break-it-all, the Old and the new Pai Paulino were famous "entertainers"; also the black women Mary Ant, Rose Mary, Shrieky Mary, the Wogiant and the black Cartusian. Either pleasing or disgusting, with the advent of the 20th century, the participation of black men in the bullrings gradually diminished until disappearing or being replaced by other sorts of amusements.

a face, the depths of the soul, in clay, emerging from the “laborious gestation” of “one of the most profoundly creative genius of the contemporary world” (Almeida, 1933: 117)²⁴.

5. Pai Paulino among Africans

In this paper, it was not our intention to approach the diverse representations of black men, which are part of the heritage of Bordalo Pinheiro. However, when focusing on his sculpture and favouring the bust of Pai Paulino, it soon became clear that these representations did not belong to the humorous style. It was necessary to integrate them into the author’s artistic diversity. The differences are significant between the depictions of Pai Paulino and Gungunhana. In their union is Bordalo Pinheiro’s geniality. He was watchful of everything that surrounded him, an artist “in all things and of all things an artist”, as his friend, Júlio César Machado said (2005). In general, if in his portrayals of black men, his drawing is full of paternalism, incivility and inferiority, the truth is that we can also find goodness, trustfulness, resilience and character. Quite frequently, a sense of humanism and indignation against slavery emerges from his graphic work.

Typically, when talking about Bordalo Pinheiro, one of our first thoughts is his skill in caricature art, a field where he became known, in Portugal and abroad. In this field, Bordalo was “an indelible and unmistakable name in the Portuguese 19th century” (Couto, 2003-2006)²⁵. However, it should be added that Bordalo was not just a caricaturist. In addition to the countless humorous drawings, customs paintings, illustrations, chronicles, portraits, statuettes, decorative pieces or everyday objects, with a realistic or kitsch taste, Bordalo captured reality, filtered it through the sieve of sensibility and created testimonies supported by his genius. His personal style offers a peculiar communication of reality but, clearly, the social diversity, the political contingencies, the economic circumstances and the cultural contexts influenced and directed his creativity. The historical

framework is fundamental to understand his work, just as it is essential to discern his satirical humour that its interpretation is not literal.

His representations of black men and the African world related to colonial issues do not diverge from what was at the centre of the debate, either concerning national circumstances or international relations. Even if they are contemporary, both in the busts of the former slave Pai Paulino and in the several productions of the black king Gungunhana, the historical premises have, necessarily, a considerable weight.

At that time, colonial issues and international relations were of particular importance. It can be highlighted that the Berlin Conference (1884-1885), the British Ultimatum (1890), the campaigns of conquest and pacification in Africa, as well as the development of the ideologies of European progress and expansionism, to which are related the new forms of domination and submission on a world scale (Guimarães, 1987: 162- 163).

In Portugal there was a tumultuous period marked by economic stagnation, little industrialisation, indebtedness and great external dependence, together with political agitation and a certain revolutionary spirit, resulting from the discussion of new ideas of progress and the evolution of societies that circulated throughout Europe. The divergence with other countries of Western Europe accentuated the idea and feeling of Portugal’s decay.

The intellectual movement 70’s Generation and the Conferences of the Casino give voice to the anxieties and proposals for changes that could lead to the exit from the state of decline and indifference that had appeared in Portuguese society. Rafael is part of this socio-cultural elite that, imbued with progressive ideals, aimed at this transformation towards modernity (Guimarães, 1987: 160- 161). The Portuguese constraints, the movements of the European powers, the imperialisms and the civilizational rakings, the singularities of places and peoples enwrap Bordalo’s criticism and humour, where, often, they

²⁴ The writer and art critic Fialho de Almeida admired the man and artist that Rafael Bordalo Pinheiro was. He mentions that he “did a short pilgrimage to Bordalo’s Faience Factory, in Caldas da Rainha, to study at first hand the “laborious gestation of an isolated genius and the vile indifference of a foolish public”. The reason that drove him to the visit and writing about what he observed was, he confesses, “the desire to capture an expression of Bordalo’s genius”, which seemed to him still “little known, and to produce a detailed chronicle of one of the most strangely original works that have come life in a long time in the country’s sculpture” (Almeida, 1933: 115-116).

²⁵ Júlio César Machado declares, “Never has caricature occupied such a relevant place in Portugal in the history of fashion and manners, as those reached lately under the

talent and efforts of Rafael Bordalo. The political caricature has had in other times a certain relevance, while the burlesque Supplement existed. However, the moral, fantastic and intimate caricatures, and the witticism towards abuse requires the cooperation of the public’s spirit, so to speak, with the artist, so as to be able to appreciate him, and that it does not want to cut his nails as to a scratching cat or muzzle the dog for anything it might bite. There are nations where one could write the exact history of freedom by writing the history of the caricature. We do not have censure, but it exists, if not in form, in essence, and at times for anything in Portugal it is the worst of tyrannies; it is called suitability; it could be called hypocrisy” (Machado, 2005).

arise from a game of interferences and inversion of roles that easily generate laughter and lead to double interpretations.

On the agenda, there was also the question of slavery, which marked Portuguese politics and international relations throughout the 19th century²⁶. There was also an increase in the trends of thought that sustained a civilizational hierarchy of peoples based on scientific criteria that forebode the inherent inferiority of the colonised peoples, particularly the black men, who were placed at the base of the civilizational scale. Europe was the continent that concentrated all development conditions, and white individuals were at the top of the civilizational hierarchy (Pimentel, 2017: 273-285).

For the European intellectuals of the 19th century, the issue of race had great meaning²⁷. The problematization of hypotheses about the origin and the differences of the human species, which had long fermented in Western thought, led to the development of theories that implied the idea of equality, freedom, progress and civilisation. Arguments that are reflected in the debates about the end of slavery, which often led to the argument of the slave's inability to live as a free man, to their natural incivility and, therefore, to their inferiority and need for protection by the European powers. (Pimentel, 2013: 51-68). From here, colonialism and scientific racism sprang out.

Behind these questions pulsed the plans for an industrialised Europe, which looked at Africa as a large market, not only for the surplus of industrial production but also for the acquisition at low cost of raw materials, provided by abundant cheap labour. The observation of Oliveira Martins in this regard is elucidating: "With freedom, with humanity, no farms were ever colonised" (Martins, 1920: 234).

Following this tumult of ideas, the plans of dominion, of power and, particularly in Portugal, the crisis provoked by the British Ultimatum, the emphasis of Bordalo Pinheiro's message rested at times in a patriotic exaltation, an attack on the African resistance, or on a destructive criticism of

national and foreign political strategies. These attitudes are particularly striking in the use of the ethnic dimension of African societies and the representation of Gungunhana²⁸.



Fig. 4: "Gungunhana before". "Gungunhana after".
©Museu da Cerâmica das Caldas da Rainha, Portugal

In his drawings, Bordalo portraits him in many ways, including, as a dandy, a civilised older man and a scribe, but always mocking the real figure or pointing out the picturesque of his existence in Lisbon (Pinheiro, 1896, 14 de Março; 1896, 11 de Abril). The most famous representation is, however, one in which the king appears metamorphosed in several anthropomorphic pieces and associated with an excessive zest for alcoholic beverages. This is the case of the squat bottles that, according to the captions, depict "Gungunhana before" being defeated, with an

²⁶ On July 3, 1842, Portugal abolished slave trade, which was declared a crime of piracy on July 25. On February 25, 1869, slavery was abolished in all Portuguese territories, and the slaves acquired the condition of freemen. In 1877, the condition of serfdom was extinguished, and the freemen became "subject to public tutelage until April 29, 1878. Legally slavery and serfdom were extinguished. In practice, however, the reality was something else. In Brazil, the end of slave trade was decreed in 1850 and on May 13, 1888, the Golden Law declared the end of slavery. Bordalo Pinheiro, during his stay in Brazil, knew this reality closely.

²⁷ In Portugal, Oliveira Martins, contemporary of Rafael Bordalo Pinheiro, was one of the authors that dedicated himself to the study of the issues related with the origin

and variety of the human species. To him the black was an "adult child", an "anthropologically inferior sort, not unlikely close to the anthropoid and quite undeserving of the name man". Given this "the notion of an education of the blacks" was "absurd, not only in relation to history, as well as concerning the mental capability of these inferior races". Their inferiority made the notion of a "civilization of the savages" nothing but an illusion (Martins, 1920: 284-286).

²⁸ With the arrest of this important African King, Portugal wanted to assure its rule over East Africa, in accordance with the policy of effective occupation, established at the Berlin Conference.

open smile, a victorious glance, the upright posture of one who holds power, and having a stick in one hand and a bottle of Port wine in the other, and “Gungunhana after” being defeated, sad, with the symbol of power replaced by a white beret and with hands and feet tied with a thick chain. Bordalo bends him under the intensity of double bondage. In the cartoon titled *The Portuguese facing the foreigner*, with Victor Hugo’s quote “There are no small people, only small men”, Bordalo enacts the Portuguese position facing the demands of the Berlin Conference, establishing the difference between the situation before and after the arrest of Gungunhana in Africa. A Portuguese military man, small and slender, regarding his European partners, becomes a giant, holding a rifle with a small figure of Gungunhana, hanging from the barrel. Here the devaluation of some and the magnitude of others are well exposed in the way stature and dignity are tampered with (Pinheiro, 1896, 6 de Fevereiro).



Fig. 5: “The Portuguese facing the foreigner: There are no small people, only small men”. Source: http://hemerotecadigital.cm-lisboa.pt/Periodicos/OAntonioMaria/1896/1896_master/OAntonioMariaN432N443.pdf.

Here, it is recognisable, as in the “Gungunhana bottles”, the distance existing between humiliation and pride, regardless of the person. There may also be present a particular formulation of the collective unconscious and of the national ambitions defrauded against the international context, where the Portuguese were seen as “The Zulus of Europe” (Pinheiro, 1884, 11 de Dezembro):

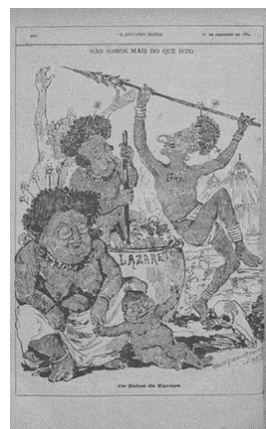


Fig. 6: “The Zulus of Europe”. Source: http://hemerotecadigital.cm-lisboa.pt/Periodicos/OAntonioMaria/1884/1884_master/OAntonioMariaN240N291.pdf

It is also a fact that, often through allegories with civilizational contrasts and the analogy with stereotypes about Africa and the Africans that had been passed along for centuries, Rafael Bordalo strikes a precise blow on the irresponsibility and servility displayed by the Portuguese rulers in face of the European interests, particularly the British. Concerning this issue, the cartoon “The problem of Loango” with the caption “The inland black teaches the civilized white how to proudly hold a flag; it would be better if he would teach him how to whitewash the house, for he might have more of a knack for it” is quite enlightening (Pinheiro, 1883, 20 de Setembro).



Fig. 7: “The inland black teaches the civilised white how to hold a flag proudly; it would be better if he would teach him how to whitewash the house, for he might have more of a knack for it”. Source: <http://hemerotecadigital.cm-lisboa.pt/Periodicos/OAntonioMaria/1883/18>

Rafael goes into the past to reveal the present. In an inverted scene, the Portuguese flag is hoisted in the indigenous village, and where the crown and the spanking paddle symbolize the interconnected powers, and while cursing – the monarchy and slavery –, he attacks the leadership, praises colonial enterprise and leaves, hovering, inscribed the remark of respectability for both Africans and Portuguese. This does not, however, mean that the white colonisers identify with the colonised blacks and that to the latter a minority statute is not attributed, which actually justified being tutelage by those (Guimarães, 1987: 179-180).

6. Final remark

The irony, the rebelliousness, the excesses, the allegories, the critical vivaciousness, and the analogies are essential issues in the work of Bordalo Pinheiro. However, through his particularities, we gain access to the many levels of reality, often less spoken of, even at times almost imperceptible, dissimulated or even ambiguous and contradictory²⁹. In the full or soft lines of his drawings, in the excessive or miniaturised forms, grotesque or naturalist, of his work, exists a concrete reality, a critic, an opinion and a warning. Bordalo criticised, denounced and attacked, but also fought, defended and praised in an epoch of great turmoil of ideas and intense social and political changes.

His character that of a restless and erratic spirit: at times of a sharp acidity, at others of extreme gentleness. If on the one hand, he displays a devastating critic, at others he takes on a strong civic intervention. If sometimes he reveals an uncomfortable paternalism, marked by a certain disdain, at others he exhibits a philanthropy sprung from an intense humanism. Behind all this, seemingly contradictory complexity, the men and his time emerge, interconnected, in the artist's creativity.

The freedom with which his hands worked, at the margins of the powers, was not always appreciated, and he did not always carry out his humouristic spirit with impunity. Bordalo took the hostility with

apparent tranquillity, constantly envisioning with great energy new and bold work projects (Silva, 2007: 243). Nonetheless, near the end of his life, he confessed to the journalist Joaquim Leitão, “with unchecked bitterness and the authority of someone who [...] knew quite well the inanity and inconsistency of glory”, that “in Portugal, one is never settled. It is necessary to restart every day!...” (1935: 117). If many of the figures he caricatured granted him due recognition both still in life and after his death, the truth is that at times he felt the force of adversity, if not the flavour of prohibition³⁰. A feeling of disillusionment can be felt by the end of his life, probably also because of the failure of the ideals that had excited the spirits of so many figures of the Portuguese culture, which now, in the end of the century, gave way to disenchantment and restlessness (Túlio, 1997: 341-343).

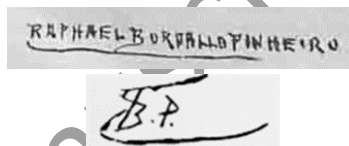


Fig. 9: Rafael Bordalo Pinheiro's signature and monogram (RBP).

The work he left can be considered a privileged hub of questioning about subjects that reach from the historical, social and political, to the mental and psychological, entering the philosophical and aesthetic, and, even, raising the discussion of the ends and functions of art itself. His approach shows that artistic activity needs not to be limited to the areas of formal perceptions, aesthetic fruition or pure entertainment. Once again, the words are from his friend and collaborator Joaquim Leitão (2005):

From his pencils, charcoals and India inks, we can retrieve documentation to catalogue and reconstruct manners, customs, environment and clothing, the history itself of the end of the century.

Rafael Bordalo Pinheiro communicated with his own time and through his creativity transmitted and provided to posterity a living memory and a perspective of events that would have otherwise

²⁹ Many of his works are singular iconographic documents of the political, social and cultural reality of Portugal in the late 19th century.

³⁰ From 1885 to 1891, Bordalo Pinheiro published the newspaper *Jornal Pontos nos ii*, which was closed by the Civil Government of Lisbon immediately after its edition of February 5, 1891, dedicated to the Rebellion of Porto of January 31, due to the criticism it contained. (Couto, 2003-2006). Many of his works also brought him recognition. Joaquim Antunes Leitão expresses the respect that illustrious figures dedicated to him: “Neither Rebelo da Silva, Pinheiro Chagas, Ramalho, Júlio César Machado,

Fernando Palha, Teixeira de Vasconcelos, João de Deus, or Manuel de Arriaga, no one from the literary greatest minds of two generations showed himself bitter” (Leitão, 2005). At Bordalo Pinheiro's funeral, Hintze Ribeiro, replied like this to someone who found his presence strange, since he had been one of the most caricatured figures: “— I was... And for very reason when I want to recall my political life, I go through the pages of Bordalo. My political story is not in the Chambers Diaries, but in the collections of caricature journals of Rafael Bordalo” (Leitão, 2005).

passed unnoticed or been forgotten.

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